

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE	31 Aug 1987
TO: C/NIC			
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REMARKS:			
FROM: A/NIO/CBW			
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION	

FORM NO. 241
1 FEB 56

REPLACES FORM 36-8
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(47)

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC 03528-87
31 August 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

VIA: National Intelligence Officer at Large
Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM:
Assistant NIO for CBW

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SUBJECT: Chemical School Briefing

1. Request your approval to accept an invitation from General Jerry Watson, Commander, US Army Chemical School, to brief the Senior Commander Course on chemical warfare proliferation issues and the terrorist threat using chemical and biological weapons. The course will be held at the Chemical School, Ft. McClellan, Alabama, on 23 through 25 October 1987.

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2. The presentation would be at the Secret level and be similar to a briefing provided to the School in March 1987.

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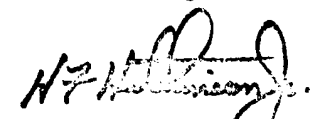


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CONCUR:


National Intelligence Officer at Large

31 Aug 1987
Date


Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council

31 AUG 1987
Date

CL BY SIGNER
DECL OADR

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SUBJECT: Chemical School Briefing

APPROVED:

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Chairman, National Intelligence Council

31 AUG 1987
Date

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SUBJECT: Chemical School Briefing

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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC-03320-87
26 August 1987

Senior Review Panel

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Senior Review Panel Comments on Draft
Concept Paper and Terms of Reference (TOR)
for IIM: Diverse Examples of Low Probability,
High-Impact Contingencies (DELPHIC),
internally dated 20 August 1987

1. The Panel agrees that an effort to stimulate more creative Community consideration of alternative future developments and to incorporate the resulting findings into Community products where appropriate (Objective 3, page 2) deserves encouragement. We think the DELPHIC drafts constitute one imaginative and innovational approach to the problem.

2. We believe, however, that some of the premises of the present project require further exploration. As examples:

a. We wonder whether the range of odds is not excessively wide. We had assumed that the Community--as general practice--now takes into analytic account alternative outcomes with a probability as great as one in three. We are not certain that--whatever the antecedant research breadth--inclusion of alternatives with a probability as low as one in twenty would not overburden the national estimates, although other publications might well address them.

b. We are a bit doubtful about the commonalities involved in such disparate subjects as those listed in Appendix I. Many of them are so discrete and different that wrapping six of them in the same package could distort as much as it explains. On what basis are they to be considered "representative" or "exemplary" cases? Would not the six "succinct, self-contained estimative sections" brought together in one IIM distort more than clarify? Would each have meaning in the absence of a more systematic overall context and the consideration of more likely scenarios?

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CL BY _____ Signers
DECL _____ OADR _____

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c. We note that all but possibly two of the 17 candidate topics have negative implications for the United States. Does this mean that DELPHIC considerations are basically negative expectations, however unlikely?

3. The project could of course be undertaken as a pioneering IIM, a series of short individual memoranda, or as an experimental outside contract with varying and flexible approaches for each subject selected. As a practical matter, we think the decision should turn on: (a) the prospective extent of Community support and participation, and (b) resource availability and opportunity costs. These matters seem to us line judgments. If the IIM mode is selected, we would of course be delighted to review and comment on the initial draft.

[Redacted]

William Leonhart

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cc: Chairman, NIC
VC/NIC (Mr. Fuller)
VC/NIC (Mr. Hutchinson)
NIO at Large (Kate Hall)

ODCI/SRP [Redacted]

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Distribution:

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Attachment 3

Subject: NIO/AL/AG Responses to SRP Comments
Re Draft CP/TORs for the DELPHIC Memorandum

1. (SRP Memo para 1) Regarding the SRP suggestion that the premises of the project require further exploration, I would note that the project was thoroughly explored before its modalities were committed to paper. Still, if we are to shift from an IIM to a less formal project, we will be assessing how this would affect the approach taken in the CP/TORs and producing a revised version in the coming weeks.

2. (SRP Memo para 2.a) I do not believe the range of odds is excessively wide. We suggested the numerical values only as a means of describing the approximate range to people who are more comfortable with numbers than with words like "improbable" and "unlikely." For our upper limit, we picked a probability of one in three because, like the SRP, we think the Community routinely examines contingencies more likely than that. For our lower limit, we picked one in 20 because it is the reciprocal of the equally arbitrary 95-percent confidence level widely used to justify judgments based on statistical correlations. Like the SRP, we think the Community should not waste its time on potential developments less likely than that. Actually, though, we know of no reliable way of assessing with any precision the relative likelihoods of improbable social or political developments. I suspect we are doing well if we come within 10 or 15 percent. Thus all our range really means is "roughly one chance in five."

3. (SRP Memo para 2.b) I do not believe the proposed juxtaposition of several disparate subjects in the same package need be a problem. "Commonalities" in the DELPHIC Memorandum would include:

- That occurrence of the contingency in question would have a major impact on US interests.
- That the Community currently considers the likelihood of this contingency occurring as low, though not inconceivable, and has hitherto not paid much attention to it.
- That examining this contingency in the DELPHIC Memorandum may offer insights into how such contingencies may be treated in other Community publications.

In addition, even in a modified project, each case study would, as a minimum, address a common set of key questions -- along with

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any appropriate case-specific questions -- to facilitate a comparative evaluation of lessons learned.

4. (Also SRP Memo para 2.b) Clearly, certain kinds of intelligence issues are generic: prospects for political instability in country X; prospects for economic collapse (or resurgence) in country Y; the Communists take over country Z; and so on. Lessons learned (if any) in assessing representative examples of such issues could be applied to the entire generic category.

5. (Also SRP Memo para 2.b) I think the SRP is a bit too preoccupied with which contingencies are addressed and whether they will be compatible. This IIM is as much about the process of identifying and evaluating unlikely foreign contingencies as it is about the contingencies themselves. Nothing precludes the Community or any constituent agency from evaluating one or more of the proposed contingencies in detail in its own context, and then presenting the results in a separate publication. Indeed, one hoped-for benefit of this project is that, through it, previously unexamined contingencies meriting such thorough treatment may be identified.

6. (SRP Memo para 2.c) I, too, am somewhat concerned that only two of the candidate DELPHIC topics have positive implications for the United States. The main cause is that almost all of the scores of topics proposed by Community analysts and NFIB representatives from which these finalists were selected were negative developments. I think we should make sure that at least one positive development is included on the final list. We ought to be exploring the opportunities as well as the risks inherent in alternative scenarios, including those at the outside edge of the probability spectrum.

7. (SRP Memo para 3) I believe the SRP has accurately described the alternatives. While I favor producing an innovative IIM, I can also see certain advantages to other approaches, such as producing a NIC Memorandum.

Kate

Katherine J. Hall

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